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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PHNOM PENH 000622

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR EAP/MLS, P, D, DRL, INR
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [CB](#)
SUBJECT: CAMBODIA ELECTION: JAPANESE - "MUCH MORE FAIRLY
CONDUCTED"; EU - "FALLS SHORT"

REF: A. PHNOM PENH 613
[B](#). PHNOM PENH 611
[C](#). PHNOM PENH 565

[1](#). (SBU) SUMMARY: The Japanese and EU observer missions released statements on the National Assembly Election which praised the reduced levels of violence and intimidation and noted the generally smooth electoral process. The Japanese mission noted that irregularities should be handled through the appropriate mechanisms and the EU encouraged all stakeholders to combine their efforts in order to resolve problems. On reported irregularities, the EU noted the scale of reported problems was not sufficient to warrant the conclusion that the outcome would be changed. An SRP protest rally is planned for July 30. END SUMMARY.

Japan: Nuanced Praise

[2](#). (SBU) The Embassy of Japan issued a statement at the end of the day on July 28 stating that the election was "conducted much more fairly than in previous ones." On irregularities, the Japanese called on the Cambodian government to "deal with them in an appropriate manner." The Japanese embassy called on all Cambodians to maintain the peaceful environment that has prevailed to date and to respect the election results.

[3](#). (SBU) While praising an election marked by less violence and fewer complaints as well as more technical proficiency, Chief Observer of the EU Election Observation Mission Martin Callanan June 29 told a press conference that the overall electoral process fell short of a number of key international standards. Points raised were the lack of confidence in the impartiality of the National Election Committee (NEC) (a point the UNDP has been making for some time (Ref C)) and the lack of free and equal access to the media. The EU also noted the voter deletion list, which "disenfranchised around 50,000 previously registered voters" and are the core of a protest being made by the four main opposition parties. The EU praised the "good" turnout (75 percent) and the well-administered polling and counting process and technically good election process. Other points noted were the inadequate voter education activities and lack of participation by women in the official process (though EU political officer Line Urban praised the participation of women in Cambodia's civil society organizations during the election).

EU: Formal Evaluation in October

[4](#). (SBU) The EU will not make its formal evaluation until October and EU participants avoided saying whether the

election was acceptable or remarking on whether it was free and fair. On irregularities, Callanan said that there was some evidence, but not of a sufficient scale to affect the outcome. He called on all parties to make use of the formal complaints process and promised that EU observers would investigate any allegations if they were provided with evidence.

15. (SBU) SRP parliamentarian Mu Sochua hijacked the EU press conference at one point to denounce the election results. Referring to a press conference in the morning on a NICFEC Sample Based Observation of the election, she incorrectly/incorrectly stated that 24.9 percent of voters could not find their names on voter lists. In fact, NCIFEC's data showed that in 75 percent of all voting stations, the number of voters who could not find their names was less than five. And, in 24.9 percent of all voting stations, more than five persons could not find their names. (NOTE: In the absolute worst-case scenario, if all 700 voters from all of these stations had been disenfranchised, that would represent 3 percent of registered voters. Based on our observers' reporting, we believe the actual number is a small fraction of that. END NOTE.) Mu Sochua was corrected at least three times in the morning press conference and appeared to understand the distinction between voters (of whom there are 8.1 million) and voting stations, yet she persisted in her "mistake" in the EU conference in front of many international media outlets. Post will send the NDI study to the desk.

16. (SBU) Sam Rainsy Party activists are passing out leaflets in Phnom Penh calling on all voters who could not

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vote on election day to join a protest at Sam Rainsy Party headquarters the morning of July 30. At least one leafleter has been detained by police. An SRP cabinet member told Pol/Ec Chief that he hoped the rally would remain inside SRP headquarters, but could not say it would not lead to an unauthorized and potentially violent march on the NEC, which sits in the Ministry of Interior compound less than a mile away.

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